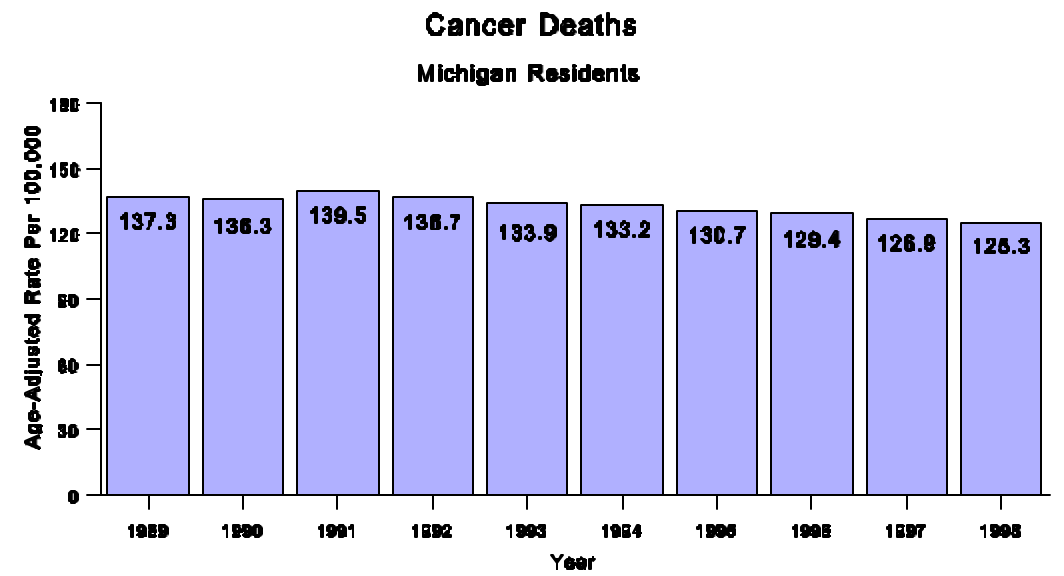


Vital Statistics Indicators

Cancer Deaths



Source: Division for Vital Records and Health Statistics, MDCH

How are we doing?

Cancer is the second leading cause of all deaths in Michigan and the leading cause of Years of Potential Life Lost (YPLL) for people below the age of 75.

Cancer refers to more than 100 different diseases, each characterized by the uncontrolled growth and spread of abnormal cells. The most common cancers in Michigan are lung cancer, colorectal cancer, breast cancer, and prostate cancer. Cancer deaths can be reduced by changes in lifestyle, such as quitting smoking or improving diet.

In 1998, there were 19,442 deaths due to cancer in Michigan. The age-adjusted rate for cancer deaths was 125.3 per 100,000 population. The cancer death rate in Michigan has been declining during the past 10 years.

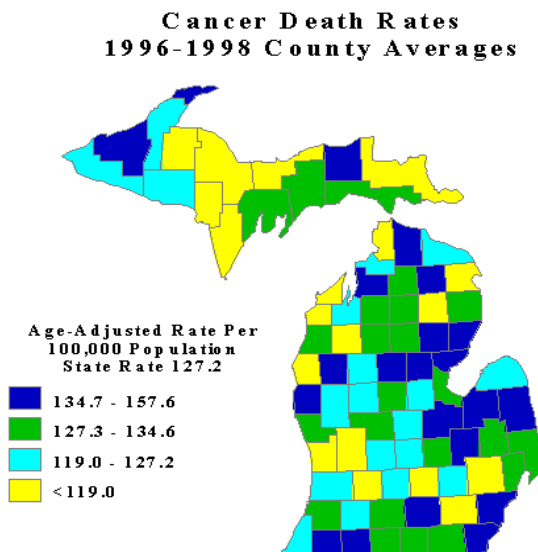
How does Michigan compare with the U.S.?

Michigan's 1997 age-adjusted cancer death rate of 126.9 was similar to the U.S. rate of 125.6. Cancer was the second leading cause of all deaths in the U.S. and the leading cause of YPLL in 1997.

How are different populations affected?

In Michigan, 40.7 percent of cancer deaths occurred to individuals aged 75 or older in 1998. In the same year, individuals ages 50 to 74 years accounted for 51.2 percent of deaths due to cancer.

African-Americans had higher cancer death rates in 1998 than whites with rates of 161.1 and 121.1, respectively.



The cancer death rate for men was 40 percent higher than the rate for women (150.2 and 107.6, respectively). African-American men had the highest cancer death rate of 211.5.

What other information is important to know?

Cigarette smoking is the leading preventable cause of cancer. Other risk factors include high-fat and low-fiber diets, sedentary lifestyles, and environmental factors such as radon exposure.

Early detection, through mammograms, Pap smears, sigmoidoscopies, and digital rectal exams may lead to increased survival. Some physicians believe that the Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) test for men may also be helpful.

What is the Department of Community Health doing to affect this indicator?

The department is actively working to decrease the incidence and impact of cancer. The department performs testing on a variety of biological and environmental specimens for cancer related toxins such as PCBs and pesticides. The department's Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program provides clinical breast exams and mammograms to screen for breast cancer and Pap smears to detect cervical cancer for women with lower incomes. Information about the efficacy of screening protocols is also monitored and analyzed. Ongoing surveillance of trends in cancer incidence and mortality particularly for lung, breast, colon, and prostate are currently being conducted. Public and professional education programs focus on breast, cervical, and prostate cancers as well as tobacco use reduction.

The department is actively working to decrease the use of tobacco since smoking is a preventable cause of certain types of cancer. Programs to reduce tobacco use include promoting strong public and

voluntary policies to increase awareness of the danger of tobacco use and secondhand smoke; to prevent the sale and promotion of tobacco to youth; and to provide a statewide media campaign with prevention, cessation and secondhand smoke messages. Initiatives include Medicaid coverage for smoking cessation products, developing a telephone-based cessation support program for Medicaid patients, and offering self-help kits and tobacco related information. The department provides training for health professionals and other service providers to recognize and treat nicotine addiction. Tobacco use prevention is offered through Teen Health Centers/Alternative Models.

Last updated: February 2000.